UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

Memphis, Tennessee
May 9, 1969

Re: INVADERS, also known as
Black Organizing Project
RACIAL MATTERS

On May 7, 1969, a first source advised that a militant black nationalist group of young Memphis, Tennessee, Negroes, now known as Invaders, was originally formed in the Summer and Fall of 1967 by three Memphis Negroes, Coby Vernon Smith, John Burrell Smith, and Charles Laverne Cabbage. During the Fall of 1967 and Spring of 1968, it assumed the name of Black Organizing Project (BOP), with subsidiary cells known as Afro-American Brotherhood (AAB) at Owen College; Black Student Association (BSA) at Memphis State University; LeMoyne Intercollegiate Chapter of the NAACP (LIC, NAACP) at LeMoyne College; Invaders, primarily consisting of high school students and school dropouts; and City Organizers, consisting of young nonstudent adults, all having a combined average membership of about one hundred. The ostensible purpose was to create pride in black identity, to teach black culture and black history, and obtain employment for young blacks.

On May 7, 1969, source one and source two advised that Black Organizing Project (BOP), beginning in the Spring of 1968, degenerated into a group of approximately 30 to 35 young Memphis blacks, who increasingly adopted a philosophy of hatred of the white race, hatred of capitalistic system, and all constituted legal authority, particularly law enforcement agencies. Theirs is a philosophy of nihilism and anarchy.

Both sources added that beginning in the Summer of 1968, the Invaders became a dominant group. LIC,NAACP disbanded. AAB disbanded. BSA at Memphis State University became an autonomous organization with no current formal relationship with the Invaders, and the City Organizers ceased to exist.

DISCLOSURE
157 - 8410 - 23

INVADERS

Since June, 1968, approximately thirty Invaders have committed various local crimes, including arson, robbery, larceny, forgery, prostitution, narcotics violations, and shooting of police officer, as well as inciting to riot in public schools. Over 25 have been convicted for these offenses, most of them making bond and appealing convictions. For example, John Burrell Smith has been convicted of inciting a high school riot and possession of marijuana. Charles Laverne Cabbage has been convicted of carrying a pistol, third degree burglary, and refusal to report for Armed Forces induction.

Both sources added that these arrests and the attendant publicity have weakened the influence of the Invaders and caused them to be less vocal and less publicly contentious. Their membership is estimated at forty with only about twenty hard-core members. The Invaders have no financial resources of consequence which further restricts their activities. Sources one and two added that the Invaders primarily engage in psychological warfare by attempting to convince the community that they are far more powerful and potentially violent than is actually the case. Sources one and two advised that on occasion the Invaders refer to their group as the BOP but actually the only active cell is the Invaders.

SOURCES:

Source one is [redacted]mphis file 170-70).

Source two is [redacted]

[redacted] Memphis file 157-1613).